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The Earnest Communicant

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THE

EARNEST COMMUNICANT.

A Course of Preparation for the Lord's Table.

BY THE

RT. REV. ASHTON OXENDEN, D.D.

BISHOP OF MONTREAL,
AND METROPOLITAN OF CANADA.

Two Hundred and Twenty-eighth Thousand.

LONDON:
HATCHARDS, PICCADILLY;
HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO. 32 PATERNOSTER ROW.
1871.

Many books have been written to explain the nature of the Lord's Supper, and to exhort persons to partake of it. Such is not the object of this book. It is not intended for one who is seeking information respecting the Holy Communion; but it offers helps to one who is already an 'Earnest Communicant,' or desires to be so; and it is intended, under God, to assist him in rightly preparing himself from time to time for that holy Ordinance.

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The Institution of the Lord's Supper.

ST. MATTHEW, xxvi. 26–29.

AS they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.'

(See also Mark, xiv. 22–25; Luke, xxii. 14–20; 1 Cor. x. 16, 17.)

1 Cor. xi. 23–29.

FOR I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to *himself, not discerning* the Lord's body.'

Thus did our Lord appoint this heavenly Feast. He invites to it all His believing people. He calls them to it; yea, He bids them come. To each He says, 'Do this in remembrance of me.' God grant that we may come then,

WITH A LOWLY AND CONTRITE HEART;
WITH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST;
WITH LOVE TO THE BRETHREN;
WITH AN EARNEST DESIRE TO LEAD A NEW AND HOLY LIFE;
WITH A THANKFUL REMEMBRANCE OF THE SAVIOUR'S DEATH.

And now, in order to help you towards a right receiving of this holy ordinance, I have drawn up for you a Course of Preparation. But remember that *the mere formal use* of this, or of any other Week's Preparation, will profit you nothing. You may punctually read

each meditation, and repeat every prayer, word for word; and yet, if your heart is not in the matter, you will derive no profit. For it is God alone who can tune it, and set it in order: the preparation of the heart is from Him.

I earnestly pray that He will so quicken, and prepare, and sanctify you by His Holy Spirit, that your Communion Sabbaths may prove to be seasons of much blessing and comfort to your soul. And I venture to hope, that this Form of Preparation may, by some at least, be found useful in bringing about such a happy result.

May God Himself be with you whilst you use it; leading you to a deeper knowledge of your own heart, and filling you with a more fervent love to your Saviour!

Meditations,

Heads of Self-Examination,

Resolutions,

Prayers.

The Invitation Sunday.

Meditation.

LUKE, xiv. 17.

'COME, FOR ALL THINGS ARE NOW READY.'

MY ears have been gladdened this day by an invitation to the Lord's Table. Christ's minister, in his Master's name, has called me to the Feast. It is no earthly banquet: it is a spiritual Supper. It is no ordinance of man: it is my Saviour's appointment. He ordained it for my special good; to remind me of His great atonement for sin; to strengthen my faith; and to feed and nourish my soul.

How often have I heard that invitation in

God's house; and either I have deliberately refused it, or, if I have accepted it, I have not set about preparing myself for the solemn ordinance!

And now, that I am again so lovingly called, shall I *refuse to come?* As well might a sick man refuse the healing medicine placed before him; or a lame man reject the staff that is offered him; or a prisoner turn away from the friend who would unloose his fetters. Dare I disobey the command of my Sovereign? Dare I put from me the blessing which my Saviour so graciously holds out to me? Surely not; for I cannot afford to lose one drop of that heavenly shower, wherewith my God refreshes His thirsty people.

Or shall I venture to approach *carelessly and unprepared?* Jesus seems to be saying to me at this time, 'Come, for all things are *now ready.*' All things are ready on *His*

part. He has prepared His table. He stands ready to bless. He waiteth to be gracious. His arms are stretched out to welcome me. He has a pardon ready for me, and an abundance of grace to meet my wants. 'If any man hear my voice (He says), and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.'

Oh, that *I* may only be ready also! With God's help I will spend the next few days in solemn preparation for this holy sacrament. I will trim my lamp. I will polish my armour. I will set my house in order. I will look into the inner chambers of my heart. I will endeavour to drive out everything that offends; and I will pray that my heart may become a fit dwelling-place for Christ.

I know that 'the preparations of the heart are from the Lord;' and that if He does not work in me, all my efforts will be in vain.

May He give me His Holy Spirit to help me in my endeavours, so that I may 'come holy and clean to such a heavenly feast, in the marriage-garment mercifully provided for me!' And oh, that this communion may be a more comfortable and precious one to me than any that I have yet partaken of!

Let me now commend myself to God, and implore His gracious help.

Prayer.

ALMIGHTY GOD, who hast had such compassion on a world of sinners, that Thou hast sent Thy dear Son to redeem it, grant that I may be a rich partaker of all those blessings which He has purchased for me. I thank Thee for the many means of grace which Thou hast pro-

vided; and above all for that sacred Feast, to which I have this day been invited.

Lord, forgive my past unworthy communions; my neglect of preparation; my want of faith, and earnestness, and love. Oh, pardon the guilt of my holiest services. Thou knowest how mixed they have been with sin, and how sadly imperfect even the best of them are in Thy sight. There has been no lack of grace, O Lord, on Thy part; all the lack has been on mine. Thou hast been all strength; but I have been all weakness. With Thee there has been all fulness; but with me all emptiness. Thou hast been ready to give; but I have been slow to receive.

Warm now, I beseech Thee, this cold heart of mine. Revive, Lord, Thy work within me. Put new life into my soul. Be pleased to make this approaching communion one of rich blessing to me. Reveal Thyself more

fully to my soul. Draw nearer to me, and make me to taste that Thou art gracious.

Bless my preparation for the coming ordinance. Enable me to examine my heart as in Thy sight. Assist me in my holy meditations. Give me strength to carry out any good resolutions I may form. Pour out upon me a spirit of prayer. May I be honest with myself, and earnest with Thee. Give me largely of the Holy Spirit, to convince me thoroughly of my sins, to show me the fulness and preciousness of Christ, and to make me holier in heart and life. Oh, that this may be unto me a time of blessing, a season of refreshing from the Lord.

Hear me, O my God, in Thy great mercy; and graciously bestow on me all that I have asked for, and all that I have need of, for the sake of Jesus Christ, my ever blessed Saviour. *Amen.*

Monday.

SUBJECT—REPENTANCE.

[The most profitable way of using these Meditations, Heads of Self-Examination, Resolutions, and Prayers, will be to choose for the purpose some quiet moments in each day, when your mind will be less likely to be disturbed by the world around you. They may be used either separately, or together.]

Meditation.

LUKE, xviii. 13.

'THE PUBLICAN STANDING AFAR OFF, WOULD NOT LIFT UP SO MUCH AS HIS EYES UNTO HEAVEN.'

WHAT a pattern of a truly humble and contrite soul! Let me gaze awhile on this picture; and let me remember that it is drawn by Him who knows well the

heart of man; and it is drawn too for my profit.

There were two men. One had been exclaiming in a boastful spirit, 'God, I thank thee that I am not as other men,' &c. 'I have some goodness of my own to plead before Thee, some righteousness of my own to trust in, and to recommend myself to Thee. I am not on a level with the common herd of sinners. I have fasted twice this week. I have been guilty of no outward, gross sin.'

But what says the other? See him standing afar off, conscious that he is not worthy to draw nigh to a holy God—convinced that he has nothing in himself, nor has done anything, for which he deserves God's favour. But, looking at the dreadful corruption of his own heart, and seeing a fearful amount of evil within, and numerous transgressions in

his outward life, he feels with David, 'My iniquities have taken such hold of me that I am not able to look up.' Cut off from every hope, and every plea of his own, he unburdens his sin-distressed soul, and breathes forth the earnest cry, 'God be merciful to me a sinner!'

Now hear the judgment of Him who is the Friend of sinners; 'I tell you (I, who am the Judge of all, tell you), this man went down to his house justified rather than the other.' And hear the reason: 'For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.'

Oh, for the spirit of this publican! What! am I less a sinner than he was? Have I less need of pardon and mercy? How utterly unworthy am I to approach God at any time; *especially to* come to His holy feast! Dare I

draw so near to my Saviour and my Lord? Verily I am not worthy to gather up the crumbs under His table. But still, I am invited, I am encouraged, I am bidden, to come. I have much reason indeed to betake myself as a poor, needy sinner to a bountiful and loving Saviour. I earnestly desire to go with a penitent, believing, expecting heart; and then shall I not be sure to come away refreshed and comforted?

Well is it for me, if the feeling of my great sinfulness sends me with brokenness of heart to Christ, smiting on my breast, and crying, 'God be merciful to me a sinner!'

Self-Examination.

[You will do well to go into your chamber and be alone, whilst you examine yourself on the several points given for this and the following days. It is not necessary to make use of them all at one time. You may perhaps find it more profitable to fix on *one* or *two*, and to dwell on these, thinking of them again and again during the day.]

DO I acknowledge my sinfulness in mere words, or do my sins really *grieve me?*

2. Is it my constant prayer that the Holy Spirit would show me what is in my heart, and convince me thoroughly of my guilt?

3. When I think of past sin, does it trouble me; or do I sometimes dwell upon it without pain?

4. What is my *besetting* sin? Is it Temper, or Pride, or Covetousness, or Idleness, or Selfishness, or Lust? or what is it?

5. Am I making a direct effort, with God's help, to conquer it?

6. Do I not sometimes confess the burden of sin without feeling it?

7. Are there not many sins which I have never mourned over at all?

8. When I think of God's perfect holiness, do I feel my utter unworthiness to come to His table now, and to dwell with Him hereafter?

9. Do I sincerely wish to forsake *all* sin, however dear to me?

[Having discovered, I trust, in some measure, how matters stand with you, it will be well, in God's strength, to make the following solemn Resolutions:—]

Resolutions.

I WILL think of my sins daily, to humble me, and to bring me to repentance.

2. I will look more narrowly into my thoughts, words, and actions, that I may feel more of the contrite spirit of the Publican.

3. I will bring every sin to Christ, asking Him to pardon it, and to give me power to forsake it.

4. Having found out my besetting sin [*here speak of it to yourself by name*], I will not leave it, until, by God's help, I have fairly driven it from my heart.

5. I will avoid all occasions of sin, and every place where I am likely to be tempted, especially ——.

6. I will be more watchful against Satan's attacks, and against my own deceitful heart.

7. I am resolved to lead a holy life, walking with God's people, and in His blessed ways.

[But as you know that all your best resolutions will utterly fail, without God's assistance, humbly kneel before Him, and ask for grace to carry out your good *intentions.*]

Prayer.

O BLESSED SAVIOUR, I acknowledge myself to be a poor unworthy sinner; and yet I have an earnest desire to partake of Thy heavenly Feast; but, on account of my many and grievous sins, I tremble and fear to approach unto it. I come therefore to Thee, the Fountain of mercy, earnestly entreating Thee to wash me from my guilt. I come to Thee, the good Samaritan, hoping that Thou wilt bind up my wounds. I come to Thee, as the Publican did, conscious of my sinfulness, and trusting in Thy mercy.

O my God, I open my grief, and discover my iniquities, unto Thee. I see my folly, and own that I have gone astray, and dishonoured Thee. Do Thou touch this frozen heart, that it may melt. Give me to feel a

godly sorrow for my sins, and yet a humble hope of pardon. I have no merit. I can plead no goodness of my own. Here is nothing but filthy rags. Oh, throw Thy garment of righteousness around me.

Lord, I have forsaken Thee, the Fountain of living waters; and have been satisfied with broken cisterns. But now my soul is athirst for Thee. My God, I feel weary of sin. My iniquities are like a heavy burden, too heavy to bear. Oh, let Thy mercy be shown towards me.

To whom shall I apply, O my Saviour, but to Thee? Thou loosest the prisoners; Thou feedest the hungry; Thou givest sight to the blind; Thou raisest them that are bowed down; Thou hast pity on sinners. Receive me graciously. Think not upon my sins, but think upon Thy mercy. Think upon Thy blood, and pardon me. Thou camest to call

sinners to repentance. Oh, speak peace to my soul.

Draw aside my heart from every evil way. Keep me from the assaults of Satan. Shield my soul in the hour of temptation. Oh, give me power against sin, to subdue it, and to put it from me. Especially enable me to watch against——*, which is my besetting sin. Teach me to hate it, as Thou hatest it. O Lord, enable me from this time forth, to give myself wholly and unreservedly to Thee. Send down Thy Spirit into my heart, to fit and prepare it for Thy service here, and for Thy presence hereafter.

Help me, O my God, to carry out the resolutions I have just formed. Thou knowest my weakness; strengthen me by Thy Almighty grace.

* Here mention any sin or sins, of which your conscience *specially* accuses you.

Lord, I am but a traveller and a stranger here; go Thou before me, and I will follow Thee. Lead me through this barren wilderness; and leave me not, till Thou hast brought me safely to the heavenly Canaan. Grant this for the sake of Him who hath loved and redeemed me, Jesus Christ, my Saviour. *Amen.*

Tuesday.

SUBJECT—FAITH.

Meditation.

MATTHEW, XV. 25.

'THEN CAME SHE, AND WORSHIPPED HIM, SAYING, LORD, HELP ME.'

LET me take this Woman of Canaan as my example in believing. And oh, that my faith may be as strong as hers!

1. *She comes to the Saviour*—not to physicians, but to Jesus; for she feels that He alone can do for her what she wants. And is not Christ *my* Saviour, my *only* Saviour? Who else can heal me, can wash out my *guilt, and give me peace?* He is the great

Helper of my soul, to whom I must have recourse.

2. *She deeply feels her need.* Had she not, she would not have come to our Lord. She had a poor suffering daughter, for whom she was greatly distressed. And it was a deep sense of her utter need that led her to think of the Saviour. Oh, that I felt *my* wants more deeply! Oh, that *my* spiritual disease gave me more uneasiness! Then should I feel a more earnest desire for Him, who is the great and good Physician of souls. The more the Holy Spirit convinces me of sin, the more eagerly shall I long for that pardon which Christ alone can give me.

3. *She makes a direct application to Jesus* She is not content with hearing that He gave relief to this or that sufferer. She wants Him to relieve *her*. She brings her own case before Him. And shall I be satisfied with the

bare belief that He is *a Saviour*—that He hath saved *others?* No, I must go to Him *myself.* It is true, I cannot *see* Him as she did; but I can look to Him with the eye of faith; I can approach Him with a believing heart.

4. *Mark her perseverance.* Jesus at first made as though He regarded her not. But her faith upheld her. She pressed her cause. She would receive no denial. Here is true faith—the faith that grasps salvation. Christ is at this moment holding out to me all the blessings of His atonement: faith is the hand which I must put forth to receive them. Christ has purchased salvation for me: faith lays hold of it, and makes it mine.

5. *She is accepted.* 'Jesus said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt.' What an encouragement *to me! For is* there not acceptance for *me*

also? My faith, alas, is small; but He graciously accepts it. My heart is sadly cold; but He can warm it. I am utterly powerless in myself; but He has said, 'My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.'

Self-Examination.

AM I resting my hope of acceptance on Christ alone?

2. Is He precious to my soul?

3. Do I realise my union with Him?

4. In time of distress or difficulty do I go to Him with the cry of the Canaanitish woman, 'Lord, help me?'

5. Am I walking by faith, and not by sight?

6. Do I feel, day by day, that I am only a stranger here, and am I looking for my home above?

7. Do I feel my unbelief to be positively sinful, and do I mourn over it before God?

8. Can I place myself in God's hands, fully persuaded that He orders every single event of my life, sending me joy or sorrow as I need it?

9. Does reliance on Christ bring peace to my soul?

Resolutions.

I WILL make this a special subject of prayer, that God may pardon my unbelief, and strengthen my faith.

2. I will look up more simply to Christ, and depend more entirely upon Him; and I will live daily 'as seeing Him who is invisible.'

3. I will live more for eternity, and less for this present world.

4. I will take all things as from God, believing that they will assuredly work together for my good.

5. I will meditate more on an unseen Saviour, and on the promised joys of Heaven.

Prayer.

O MY GOD, I desire now to approach Thee: do Thou grant me Thy presence and blessing. Strengthen my faith. Thou knowest how miserably weak it is. Oh, take away the evil heart of unbelief, and give me a believing, loving heart. I entreat this, now especially, when I am about to draw near to Thy table. Teach me to look up with penitence to my Saviour's cross, and to rejoice, believing that His blood cleanseth from all sin.

O holy Jesus, accept me, unworthy as I am. Grant me a full and free pardon; and make me to know the blessedness of the man whose unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose sin is covered. Enable me to lift up my heart to Thee, and to find Thee precious to my soul. Set up within me Thy kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Reign over me as Thy willing subject; and let me find that Thy service is indeed perfect freedom.

Lord, make me to do Thy will. Let me count nothing burdensome, which Thou layest upon me. Give me a more childlike, trusting spirit. May I ever remember that I am in my Father's hands, and that He chooses all my portion for me. When sorrows and trials come, may I trust and not be afraid, feeling assured that Thou wilt *never leave me* nor forsake me.

I desire now, at this season, to give myself afresh unto Thee. Again I would solemnly seal my soul for Thy own. Make Thyself known to me in the breaking of bread. Oh, that I may enjoy Thy presence when I kneel at Thy table. Reveal Thyself to my poor soul as Thou dost not unto the world. O my God; bless Thine own ordinance, and make it a means of grace to me. Fit also and prepare my heart for it. In that holy communion draw me closer to Thyself. Saviour of the world, I desire to go to Thy table, to commemorate Thy dying love. Oh, quicken my cold, sluggish heart. Kindle a flame of holy love within me. And make me to feel that Thou art indeed my portion.

I acknowledge with shame that I have often to mourn over much spiritual dulness. Do Thou, O Sun of Righteousness, shine into this dark soul of mine. Scatter the clouds

of unbelief, and let all be light within. Lord, increase my faith. Grant me joy and peace in believing. And accept me as Thy own child, for the sake of Jesus Christ my Saviour. *Amen.*

Wednesday.

SUBJECT—HOLINESS.

Meditation.

LEVITICUS, xix. 2.

'YE SHALL BE HOLY; FOR I THE LORD YOUR GOD AM HOLY.'

HOW infinitely holy is my God! He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. He chargeth even His angels with folly. How hateful, then, must the smallest sin be in His sight! When He looks down upon this world of ours, how sad a picture does He behold—a world 'lying in wickedness'—a world for the most part in rebellion against Him! And when He looks upon *me*, alas, alas, how much sin does He see in

me—not only in my outward life, but in my inner heart! And yet He bears with me with much long-suffering. He calls me to Himself. He invites me to come to Him. He 'draws me with the cords of a man, with bands of love.' He has provided a Redeemer for me, to save me from the hell I deserve, and to be the ransom for my lost soul.

How infinitely holy too is Jesus, my Saviour! I will think of His spotless, blameless life. He did no sin. He has set me an example, that I might follow His steps. How meekly did He bear the scoffs of His enemies! How patiently did He endure pain! How cheerfully did He accept the Cross! And in all this, what an example has He set me!

How holy too is that blessed Spirit, who *dwells with the pure* in heart! There is not

a holy thought passing through my mind, or a holy desire springing up within me, that He has not planted there. He is 'the Spirit of holiness.'

And Heaven is a holy place. It is the abode of God Himself. If I ever reach that place, my companions there will be the saints of God; my employments there will be holy. Who, then, is fit for admission there? Only he that is washed in the blood of the Lamb, and sanctified by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Ought I not therefore to be a holy person? Must I not learn to be holy here, if I would be happy both here and hereafter? I do indeed need the wedding garment to clothe my nakedness; else I can neither be a fit guest at the Lord's Supper on earth, or be admitted into His presence in heaven.

Self-Examination.

IS it my desire to become a holy person, loving what God loves, and hating what He hates?

2. Do I not only wish to escape hell and to reach heaven hereafter; but also to be holy *now*, because such is God's will concerning me?

3. Do I allow any unholy, or unchaste, or angry, or discontented thoughts to dwell in my heart; or do I make an effort to drive them away?

4. Do I always speak what is strictly true?

5. Am I in the habit of saying anything unkind, peevish, or irritating?

6. Do I use my influence rightly?

7. Is my will in all things submissive to *God's will?*

8. Am I anxious to be holy *within;* or merely to be *accounted* holy by others?

9. Is my temper subdued?

10. Am I a *growing* Christian?

Resolutions.

I WILL daily entreat God to send me His Holy Spirit, to dwell in my heart, and to carry on His sanctifying work there.

2. I will be careful to avoid everything sinful—even the *appearance* of evil.

3. If my Saviour bids me, I will cheerfully bear the Cross, for His sake.

4. I will endeavour to be a more bold, active, earnest, decided Christian.

5. I will not rest where I am, but try to attain to further degrees of holiness.

Prayer.

O LORD GOD, who dwellest in the high and holy place, and art perfectly holy Thyself, look down upon me Thy sinful creature, who now draw near to Thee in the name of Thy dear Son. I beseech Thee to make me more truly Thy servant. May each day find me living closer to Thee. Especially at this time work in me all those holy and heavenly dispositions, which shall make me a welcome guest at Thy table. And grant that I may so devoutly eat of that bread, and drink of that cup, that I may spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, and drink His blood—that I may dwell in Him, and He in me.

Lord, I trust not in my penitence, but in *Thy gracious pardon*—not in my preparation,

but in Thy acceptance. I desire earnestly to be Thine. I would willingly wear the yoke. I would cheerfully bear Thy cross. I long to be like Thee—to be holy, as Thou art holy. Oh, make me such as Thou wouldest have me to be. Conform me to Thine own image. Mould and shape me with Thine own hand. May Thy service be my delight; and may I bend my will in all things to Thine.

O my Father, I acknowledge that I have sinned against Thee. I have loved the world more than I have loved Thee; and I have followed its ways, instead of walking in Thy blessed paths. But I now desire to be entirely Thy servant. Send down Thy Holy Spirit to dwell in my heart, and to bring every thought into obedience to Thee. Increase my faith, and hope, and love. Make me to shine brightly in this dark world.

Enable me to glorify Thee. And make me in some measure useful whilst I am here. O Lord, I beseech Thee at this time to fit and prepare my heart; so that I may be a meet partaker of the mysteries of Thy holy table, and that my life here may be a daily preparation for heaven.

Accept, O Lord, my earnest prayer; and give me all that Thou seest I have need of, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

Thursday.

SUBJECT—GOD'S WORD, AND PRAYER.

Meditation.

1 SAMUEL, III. 9.

'SPEAK, LORD, FOR THY SERVANT HEARETH.

PHILIPPIANS, IV. 6.

'LET YOUR REQUESTS BE MADE KNOWN UNTO GOD.

IN the Bible *God speaks to us;* in Prayer *we speak to God.* How great a privilege! What a blessed interchange!

How can I know what the will of the Lord is! He has Himself declared it. He tells me in *His own word* what He would have me to do—how He would have me to

live here, and what He has provided for me in the world above. I have all my life had a Bible. I have read it occasionally—perhaps daily. But I have not prized it half enough. How seldom I can feel with David, and say, 'Oh, how I love thy law; thy testimonies have I taken as my heritage for ever; they are the rejoicing of my heart!'

There is no other book in the world, which can declare with authority, 'Thus saith the Lord.' Other books may be written by good *men;* but this is the Book of *God.* Other books may have *much* truth in them; but here is *all* truth. Other books may be valuable; but this book is like gold without dross. Here, as I journey on, is a Guide-post directing me to my home. Here, as I am tossed to and fro on the sea of life, *is a Compass pointing* to the haven where I

would be. Then let me study that word, as one who feels its value.

And how blessed to be permitted to make all my requests known unto God in *Prayer* —to tell Him of all my wants, to pour out before Him all my troubles, to hold communion with Him! My Father sits upon His throne above. His ear is ever open. He has stores of blessings; and only waits for me to ask, that He may bestow them on me. Then let me be oftener in His presence. Let me ask, more as if I expected to be heard. Let me speak as to a Friend. 'Three times a-day' will I pray to Him; yea, I will pray 'without ceasing.' Do I feel my sins? 'I will arise and go to my Father,' and tell them to Him. Is my heart oppressed? I will carry my cares, great and small, to Him. Am I perplexed? I will seek His counsel and direction. Do I need

daily guidance? I will be ever putting myself in His safe hands.

At this time especially, may the Lord pour out upon me 'the Spirit of grace and of supplications;' and not now only, but may I ever be seeking Him who is far more ready to give than I am to ask!

Self-Examination.

DO I regard the word of God as my *daily* nourishment?

2. Do I ever let worldly business rob me of my spiritual food, or tempt me to hurry over it?

3. Do I feel my need of the Holy Spirit's teaching, when I read my Bible? And am I constantly asking for it?

4. Do I apply the promises, and threatenings, and precepts of Scripture to my own *case?*

5. Am I regular in my Prayers? or do I ever, when pressed, omit them, or offer them up hastily?

6. Do I specially seek the Holy Spirit's help, that I may pray rightly?

7. Is prayer looked upon as a task, or as a pleasure?

8. Do I pray with the full belief that I am speaking to God, and that He hears me?

9. Am I thankful to God, when He gives me what I ask for? And when He denies me, can I still confess His goodness, without a secret murmur?

10. Am I watchful against wandering thoughts?

Resolutions.

I will read my Bible with more seriousness, more attention, and more expectation of getting a blessing.

2. I will never read it without looking up for God's teaching.

3. I will remember, as I read, that it is not the word of *man*, but the word of *God*.

4. When I discover anything to be clearly the will of God, I will at once act upon it, whatever it may cost me.

5. When I approach the throne of grace, I will consider *whom* I am going to address —the great and holy God.

6. I will give more time to prayer.

7. I will use ejaculatory prayer (that is, I will put up short petitions) often during the day.

8. I will walk with God, and hold converse with Him as with a Friend.

9. I will try to preserve *a prayerful spirit*, even when I am not engaged in actual prayer.

Prayer.

O HEAVENLY FATHER, I confess to Thee the earthliness of my heart, the deadness and dulness of my affections. My soul cleaveth unto the dust. Oh, quicken me by Thy Holy Spirit. Make me to feel my wants, my guilt, my ignorance, and my weakness.

Lord, I thank Thee that Thou hast revealed Thyself to us. I thank Thee that Thou hast given us Thy word, which is a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path. Pardon my past neglect of it. Pardon my distaste for it. Grant, Lord, that I may value it more. Give me a greater appetite for it. May I desire the sincere milk of the word, that I may grow thereby. Do Thou Thyself teach me. When I read

the Holy Book, do Thou open my eyes, that I may behold the wondrous things which it contains. Bring Thy truth home to my heart, to warn me, to arouse me, to comfort me, to show me my own wicked self, and to make known to me Christ my Saviour. Give power to Thy preached and written word. Make it a blessing to many, and a special blessing to *me*.

Lord, I thank Thee for the privilege of Prayer. How great is Thy mercy in allowing a poor sinner, such as I am, to speak unto Thee! But oh, how miserably cold are my devotions! How wandering and worldly are my thoughts! Too often has it been a mere lip-service with me. Pardon me for this. Among my other sins, forgive those which I have committed on my very knees.

And, O my God, I beseech Thee to give *me at all times* a more devout and prayerful

heart. May I love to draw near to Thy throne of grace, and to pour out my wants before Thee. May it be my delight to hold communion with Thee. And do Thou, O Holy Spirit, help my infirmities; and teach me how to pray, and what to ask for.

Heavenly Father, I beseech Thee more especially to give me a holy and devout frame, as I approach Thy Table. Pour out upon me the spirit of grace and of supplications. Make that Holy Sacrament a rich blessing to my soul. Draw near to me, O my Saviour, and fill me with Thyself. Help me forward on my way to heaven, and at last bring me there, through Thy merits, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and praise, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

Friday.

SUBJECT—THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

Meditation.

ISAIAH, LIII. 5.

'HE WAS WOUNDED FOR OUR TRANSGRESSIONS.'

DRAW near, my soul, and see this great sight; thy God bleeds for thine iniquities. See Him led like a malefactor, and nailed like a murderer to the cross; and all *for thy sake.* Look up, sinful soul, and love a dying Saviour. Think of His wounds. See His arms thrown open to receive thee. Yes, Lord, I believe that the chastisement of my peace was upon Thee, and that by *these stripes I am* healed.

How willingly did my Saviour suffer! But why? It was sin that made it needful—even *my* sin. I look with abhorrence on those who so cruelly dipped their hands in His blood. But if I would know the truth, I must look into my own breast; for *there* the real murderers dwell. This sinful nature, these vile affections, this deep rebellion against the majesty of Heaven — these brought the Lamb of God to such ignominy, torment, and death.

Here then, at His cross, let my self-abhorrence rise. Here let a holy revenge burn within my heart. These His enemies —my sinful desires and lusts—I will bring them forth, and slay them before Him. Lord, let me keep back nothing from Thee, who gavest Thyself to such suffering for me. Oh, that my head were waters, that I might weep for my sins! Shall I be more sparing

of my tears for Christ, than He was of His blood for me?

Let me, then, ever remember my Saviour. He did not forget us. He thought of us in His own extremity. In the garden, on the cross, and in the grave, His lost sheep were still in His mind. He thought of them day and night. He thinks of them now in Heaven. Oh, that I may never forget His love! And since He has in His mercy prepared a feast for my needy soul, shall I not thankfully partake of it? Shall I not do this in remembrance of Him?

Self-Examination.

AM I thankful to my Saviour for all that He has done and suffered for me?

2. When I think of His wounds, is my *heart melted?*

3. Does the thought of what He endured make me feel the exceeding sinfulness of sin?

4. Am I trusting my entire salvation to Christ?

5. Am I willing to bear reproach and suffering for His sake?

6. How should I feel if called to lay down my life for Christ?

7. Do I deny myself, and take up my cross daily?

Resolutions.

I WILL never wound my Lord afresh by committing any *known* sin.

2. When I am despised or spoken against for righteousness' sake, I will meekly bear all, feeling that I am suffering with Christ.

3. I will not be moved by the afflictions

which come in my way, knowing that we are 'appointed thereunto.'

4. When I suffer, I will cheer myself with the thought that soon my warfare will be over, and my perfect rest begin.

Prayer.

O THOU once suffering, but now exalted Redeemer, turn not away from one who greatly needs Thy mercy. Look upon a sinner whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy own most precious blood. I come to Thee, because Thou hast bidden me to come, and my soul needs Thy help. When I think of my sins, so great and grievous, I do indeed tremble; but when I behold Thy mercies, so great and plentiful, I am encouraged. Remember, O Lord, how many sorrows Thou didst endure on my account.

Oh, then, look upon me in Thy compassion, and pity and pardon all my unfaithfulness. Jesus, my hope is in Thee. O Thou bleeding Lamb of God, Thy open wounds are the refuge of my soul. I flee to Thee to hide me. O my Saviour, Thou didst hang upon the cross in all Thy poverty and nakedness, that I might wear Thy glorious robes. Thou wast wounded, that I might be healed. Come, Thou blessed Physician, and Thy servant shall be made whole. Let Thy blood be sprinkled on me. Wash this spotted soul, and heal the leprosy within.

O God, I beseech Thee to prepare me for that solemn ordinance, which so touchingly reminds me of a crucified Saviour. I desire to see and feel the plague of my own evil heart, and to come weary and heavy-laden to Christ for pardon and relief. Gladly would I remember His dying love, with a

heart weary of sin, and full of thankfulness. All this I desire to do, and to do it fervently. But, O Lord, I greatly need Thy help. When, therefore, I go to Thy table, make me to feel as one going to a most blessed Feast. Deliver me from the danger of eating and drinking unworthily, that I may not bring down judgments instead of mercies.

Meet me now, gracious God, with a full pardon for all my offences, and a cure for all my infirmities. Cleanse me with the blood of Thy dear Son, quicken me by Thy Spirit, and assure me of that eternal life which Thou hast promised to Thy people. Grant this, and all that I need, for the sake of Him who loved me, and gave Himself for me, Jesus Christ my Saviour. *Amen.*

Saturday.

SUBJECT—LOVE.

Meditation.

1 JOHN, IV. 19, 21.

'WE LOVE HIM, BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US.'

'AND THIS COMMANDMENT HAVE WE FROM HIM, THAT HE WHO LOVETH GOD LOVE HIS BROTHER ALSO.'

WHAT a precious and glorious truth, that *God* loves us! Yes, my Father loved me, even when I loved Him not. When I was yet a great way off, He saw me, and yearned over me. My piteous condition touched His heart; and though I had done so much to grieve Him, and though my heart was so cold towards Him, His love rose above it all.

Think too how much *the Saviour* loves us. His was no empty love. He gave a most costly price to redeem us—not thousands of gold and silver, not labour and toil merely, not pains and sufferings only—but *Himself.* He yielded up His own body. He gave His back to the smiters. Blessed be God, He did indeed love me, and gave Himself for me. When my heart is overwhelmed with the dead weight of sin, how sweet to feel that there is One, who stepped into my place, and bore that which would otherwise have crushed me!

And how should I feel towards my Lord for all this? Hitherto, my love to Him has been poor indeed—far, far too small. I have allowed many a rival to steal away my affections from Him, and many an earthly object to rob Him of His due. But now I desire *to throw myself* upon Him, and surrender to

Him my heart. Oh, what is the world to me, compared with what He is? Is it not all as dross and dung? Think, my foolish heart, when thou art exposed to the world's enticing vice—think of thy better portion—live on Him who is alone able to fill the void within.

And now Jesus invites me to commemorate His dying love. He bids me, with my fellow-Christians, to approach His table. If there be anything which interferes with my love to Him, or to my brethren, may I this day put it from me! May a feeling of love alone take full possession of my heart! May we all be drawn closer to the Saviour, and to one another! Oh, that I may realise the oneness of God's spiritual family, both of those in heaven, and those on earth! If I truly belong to Him, I must, I shall love Him; and I shall love my brethren too; for

is it not written, 'Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of Him;' and again, 'We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren?'

Self-Examination.

DO I love my God and Saviour *supremely*—above all else?

2. Does my love to God show itself by a desire to please Him, and a willingness to bear all for His sake?

3. Do I delight in His presence, and in holding communion with Him?

4. Do I look forward with joy to that day when I shall see God?

5. Do I desire His glory more than my own?

6. *Is it my meat* and drink to do His will?

7. Have I this mark of grace—that I love His people?

8. Am I kind, forgiving, gentle, and loving towards all?

9. Do I feel concerned for the souls of men?

10. Can I rejoice when a brother is exalted, and I am passed by?

Resolutions.

I WILL count up the Lord's mercies to my body and my soul, and try thus to stir up my heart to love Him.

2. I will make it a direct subject of prayer, that God would shed abroad His love in my heart by the Holy Ghost.

3. I will do good to Christ's people, feeling that in so doing I am serving Him.

4. I will go the Lord's Table, because He so lovingly bids me.

5. I will love my brethren for Christ's sake, and even those who have wronged me.

6. I will act towards others, as I wish them to act towards me.

7. I will think the best of my Christian brother, and the worst of myself.

8. If I cannot speak well of others, I will say little of them.

9. I will be kind to the poor and suffering, especially to those of them who belong to Christ.

Prayer.

O GOD, whose name is Love, and whose tender mercies are over all Thy works, look in compassion on my cold heart. Take it away, I entreat Thee, and give me *a warm, believing*, loving heart. I confess

O Lord, that I have loved the world, and sin, and self; but I have not loved Thee as I ought.

Make me to feel that Thou art indeed my Father. Teach me to act in all things as Thy child. Take away from me the spirit of fear, and give me the spirit of adoption. Lord, I wish to be Thine. Oh, make me what Thou wouldest have me to be. May it be my meat and drink to do Thy will; yea, may I be willing to bear much, if need be, for Thy sake.

Blessed Jesus, what great things hast Thou done for me! Thou didst become poor, that I might be rich. Thou didst become a man of sorrows, that I might rejoice. Thou didst die, that I might live. Oh, that my heart may be warmed by these touching proofs of Thy love! Let it be called off from all earthly vanities, and fixed on Thee. Draw

me, Saviour, with the cords of Thy love; draw me to Thyself.

Make me to love Thy people, as Thou hast loved me. Give me a kind and gentle feeling towards them, and towards all men. Keep me from harsh speaking; and incline me to think well of others, and badly of myself. Pour out a brotherly spirit on the congregation to which I belong: knit our hearts together. Heal our divisions, and make us as one Family.

Lord, be with us when we approach Thy Table to-morrow. Oh, that pardon, and peace, and holiness, may afresh be granted to us. Give us a sweet sense of communion with Thee. Thus may love to Christ, and love to all the brethren, be greatly strengthened and increased among us. Add, O Lord, to the number of faithful communicants throughout Thy Church. Enlarge the

borders of Thy kingdom, till all the ends of the earth remember the Saviour's sufferings, and turn to the Lord, and worship before Him. This I ask for His name's sake. *Amen.*

Sunday Morning.

[The following devotions to be used some time in the morning, before going to church.]

Self-Examination.

HAS my preparation during the past week come short of what I intended?

2. Have my past Sabbaths, and past Communions, been profitable?

3. Do I feel a greater longing for this Feast than before, and an honest desire to give myself afresh to Christ?

4. What are my motives in going to the Lord's Table this day?

5. *Do I rest my* whole soul on Christ?

6. Is it my prayer that I may live a holier life, and walk closer with my God?

7. Are there any remains of ill-will in my heart against any one?

8. Is there any one thing which keeps me back from surrendering my whole heart to Christ?

'Search me, O God, and try my heart, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.'

Prayer.

O HEAVENLY FATHER, hear me as I draw near to Thee on the morning of Thy own day, and make it a day of special blessing to my soul. Pardon my past misspent Sabbaths. Pardon me for so little valuing Thy holy ordinances. And now that I am invited to Thy House, and to Thy

Table, bestow on me a large measure of Thy grace. Prepare my heart for the sacred Feast. Fill me with love, joy, and peace. Put away from me everything that would draw off my attention from that solemn service. Grant that my whole heart may be fixed on Christ. Give me to feel my nearness to Him. Increase my faith. May the Holy Spirit produce in me a composed, calm, and devout frame.

Blessed Jesus, I wish to know Thee and to love Thee more. Oh, then, make Thyself known to me this day in the breaking of bread. So manifest Thyself to me and to my fellow-worshippers, that we may have a happy experience that Thou art in the midst of us. May it be to us a time of near and close communion with Thee, and with each other.

O Thou who art the Bread of Life, feed

our souls. Meet us in that feast, which Thou in Thy mercy hast spread. May our hearts rejoice whilst we receive the tokens of Thy dying love. May we feel Thy power, as we never felt it before. Do Thou open the door of our hearts, and come in and dwell there. May we have to-day some little foretaste of that unspeakable joy which we hope for when we shall sit down to the marriage-supper of the Lamb in heaven. O Lord Jesus, bring us to Thy banqueting-house, and may Thy banner over us be love. *Amen.*

Meditation.

1 CORINTHIANS, xi. 24.

'THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.'

O MY soul, thou art to engage this day in a most sacred ordinance. Thou art stained with sin, and burdened with

iniquity. Thou deservest nothing but punishment. But thy God hath graciously looked upon thee. He hath provided a ransom for thee. His own beloved Son hath given Himself for sinners. He hath shed His blood. And now He bids me come to Him in this holy feast. How great an honour—that I, an unworthy sinner, should be permitted to draw so near to my Saviour and my God!

How great must be the love of Jesus, to prepare so blessed a banquet, and then to bid me welcome to it! I will think of my guilt, till my soul is humbled in the dust. I will try to call to mind all my past unworthiness, till by God's grace my heart within me is broken with sorrow. And then I will look up with faith to that dear Lamb of God, who bled for such as me.

My Lord bids me to *remember* Him. He

calls me to His Table, where the broken bread and the poured out wine are fit emblems of His atoning love. Shall I not most gladly accept His invitation? Oh, that He may accept me, covered as I am with sin. And may the remembrance of Him kindle fresh love, fresh zeal, fresh earnestness, in this cold heart of mine!

How sad, if I should eat the bread and drink the wine, without ever feeding upon Christ! God forbid that it should be so with me this day! God grant that I may by faith partake of Christ, to the comfort and refreshment of my soul! For He hath said, 'My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.'

The Sacramental Service.

A devout Meditation before the Sacramental Service begins.

HOW much better is it to be here, in the courts of the Lord, than in the dwelling of the proudest monarch! One day here is better than a thousand elsewhere! How solemn, O my soul, is the celebration of this ordinance!

My Saviour has given Himself for me; and to Him I desire to turn with my whole heart. I come to my Lord, as one sick to the Physician of life—as an offender to the Fountain of mercy—as blind to the light of the eternal sun—as poor and needy to the Lord of heaven and earth.

Jesus, I come here to beg alms at Thy hands. I ask great things—greater than I

deserve to receive, but not too great for Thee to give me—I ask Thee to give me *Thyself.* Come now into my soul, and take entire possession of me. Oh, warm my heart! Oh, kindle holy fire in my breast; and fill me full of love to Thee!

Lord, give me at this time a feeling of deep contrition, and a living faith. Keep me from all worldly and wandering thoughts. Oh, that my affections may be raised upwards! And may I be able to say from my very heart, 'Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee!'

Subjects for Thought.

(IF TIME ALLOWS.)

THE HOLINESS OF GOD.—He dwells in the high and holy place. He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. Angels and Archangels veil their faces before Him. He sees into the inmost chambers of my heart.

OUR UNWORTHINESS.—How little do I deserve to approach the Lord, and to kneel at His table! Woe is me, for I am undone! My very righteousness is but as filthy rags in His sight. If I had my desert, I should be cast out.

THE MERCY AND LOVE OF JESUS.—He came to seek the lost. He is the good Shepherd, the kind Physician, the compassionate High Priest. He loves me, and His arms are now stretched out to receive me.

The Sacramental Service.

¶ *Then shall the Priest return to the Lord's Table, and begin the Offertory, saying one or more of these Sentences following, as he thinketh most convenient in his discretion.*

[Whilst the alms are being collected, try to meditate upon each text of Scripture as the minister reads it. And ask God graciously to accept the little gift which you make, as an offering to Him, and as a token of your gratitude and love.]

LET your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. *St. Matt.* v.

Lay not up for yourselves treasure upon the earth; where the rust and moth doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven; where neither rust nor moth doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. *St. Matt.* vi.

Whatsoever ye would that men should do

unto you, even so do unto them ; for this is the law and the prophets. *St. Matt.* vii.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven ; but he that doeth the will of my Father, which is in heaven. *St. Matt.* vii.

Zaccheus stood forth, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor ; and if I have done any wrong to any man, I restore four-fold. *St. Luke*, xix.

Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own cost? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? 1 *Cor.* ix.

If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your worldly things? 1 *Cor.* ix.

Do we not know, that they who minister about holy things live of the sacrifice ; and they who wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord also ordained, that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel. 1 *Cor.* ix.

He that soweth little shall reap little ; and he that soweth plenteously shall reap plenteously.

Let every man do according as he is disposed in his heart, not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver. 2 *Cor.* ix.

Let him that is taught in the word minister unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. *Gal.* vi.

While we have time, let us do good unto all men; and especially unto them that are of the household of faith. *Gal.* vi.

Godliness is great riches, if a man be content with that he hath; for we brought nothing into the world, neither may we carry anything out. 1 *Tim.* vi.

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be ready to give, and glad to distribute; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may attain eternal life. 1 *Tim.* vi.

God is not unrighteous, that he will forget your works, and labour that proceedeth of love; which love ye have showed for his Name's sake, who have ministered unto the saints, and yet do minister. *Heb.* vi.

To do good, and to distribute, forget not;

for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. *Heb.* xiii.

Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? 1 *St. John*, iii.

Give alms of thy goods, and never turn thy face from any poor man; and then the face of the Lord shall not be turned away from thee. *Tobit*, iv.

Be merciful after thy power. If thou hast much, give plenteously: if thou hast little, do thy diligence gladly to give of that little: for so gatherest thou thyself a good reward in the day of necessity. *Tobit*, iv.

He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord: and look, what he layeth out, it shall be paid him again. *Prov.* xix.

Blessed be the man that provideth for the sick and needy: the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble. *Psalm* xli.

¶ *And when there is a Communion, the Priest shall then place upon the table so much Bread and Wine, as he shall think sufficient. After which done, the Priest shall say,*

Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church militant here on earth.

ALMIGHTY and Everlasting God, who by Thy holy Apostle hast taught us to make prayers and supplications, and to give thanks, for all men; We humbly beseech Thee most mercifully [*to accept our alms and oblations, and*] to receive these our prayers, which we offer unto Thy Divine Majesty; beseeching Thee to inspire continually the universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord: And grant, that all they that do confess Thy holy Name may agree in the truth of Thy holy word, and live in unity and godly love. We beseech Thee also to save and defend all Christian Kings, Princes, and Governors; and specially Thy servant *VICTORIA* our Queen; that under her we may be godly and quietly governed: And grant unto her whole Council, *and to all that are* put in authority under her,

that they may truly and indifferently minister justice, to the punishment of wickedness and vice, and to the maintenance of Thy true religion, and virtue. Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all Bishops and Curates, that they may both by their life and doctrine set forth Thy true and lively word, and rightly and duly administer Thy holy Sacraments. And to all Thy people give Thy heavenly grace; and especially to this congregation here present; that, with meek heart and due reverence, they may hear, and receive Thy holy word; truly serving Thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life. And we most humbly beseech Thee of Thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succour all them, who in this transitory life are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity. And we also bless Thy holy Name for all Thy servants departed this life in Thy faith and fear; beseeching Thee to give us grace so to follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of Thy heavenly kingdom: Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

¶ *At the time of the celebration of the Communion, the Communicants being conveniently placed for the receiving of the Holy Sacrament, the Priest shall say this Exhortation.*

DEARLY beloved in the Lord, ye that mind to come to the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ, must consider how Saint Paul exhorteth all persons diligently to try and examine themselves, before they presume to eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup. For as the benefit is great, if with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive that Holy Sacrament (for then we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, and drink His blood; then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us); so is the danger great, if we receive the same unworthily. For then we are guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ our Saviour; we eat and drink our own damnation, not considering the Lord's Body; we kindle God's wrath against us; we provoke Him to plague us with divers diseases, and sundry kinds of death. Judge therefore yourselves, brethren, that ye be not judged of the Lord; repent you truly for your sins past; have

a lively and stedfast faith in Christ our Saviour; amend your lives, and be in perfect charity with all men; so shall ye be meet partakers of those holy mysteries. And, above all things, ye must give most humble and hearty thanks to God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, both God and man; who did humble Himself, even to the death upon the Cross, for us, miserable sinners, who lay in darkness and the shadow of death; that He might make us the children of God, and exalt us to everlasting life. And to the end that we should alway remember the exceeding great love of our Master, and only Saviour, Jesus Christ, thus dying for us, and the innumerable benefits which by His precious blood-shedding He hath obtained to us; He hath instituted and ordained holy mysteries, as pledges of His love, and for a continual remembrance of His death, to our great and endless comfort. To Him, therefore, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, let us give (as we are most bounden) continual thanks: submitting ourselves wholly to His holy will and pleasure, and studying to

serve Him in true holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. *Amen.*

¶ *Then shall the Priest say to them that come to receive the Holy Communion,*

YE that do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in His holy ways; Draw near with faith, and take this Holy Sacrament to your comfort; and make your humble confession to Almighty God, meekly kneeling upon your knees.

¶ *Then shall this general Confession be made, in the name of all those that are minded to receive the Holy Communion, by one of the Ministers; both he and all the people kneeling humbly upon their knees, and saying,*

ALMIGHTY GOD, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men; We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, Which we, from time to time, most grievously have committed, *By thought, word,* and deed, Against Thy Di-

vine Majesty, Provoking most justly Thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, And are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; The remembrance of them is grievous unto us; The burden of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon us; Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father? For thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, Forgive us all that is past; And grant that we may ever hereafter Serve and please Thee In newness of life, To the honour and glory of Thy Name; Through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ *Then shall the Priest (or the Bishop, being present,) stand up, and turning himself to the people, pronounce this Absolution,*

ALMIGHTY GOD, our heavenly Father, who of His great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto Him; Have mercy upon you; pardon and deliver you from all your sins; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness; and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

¶ *Then shall the Priest say,*

Hear what comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith unto all that truly turn to Him.

COME unto me all that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. *St. Matt.* xi. 28.

So God loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. *St. John*, iii. 16.

Hear also what St. Paul saith.

This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 1 *Tim.* i. 15.

Hear also what St. John saith.

If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins. 1 *St. John*, ii. 1.

¶ *After which the Priest shall proceed, saying,*

Lift up your hearts.

Answer. We lift them up unto the Lord.

Priest. Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.
Answer. It is meet and right so to do.

¶ *Then shall the Priest turn to the Lord's Table, and say,*

IT is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, *Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God.

¶ *Here shall follow the Proper Preface, according to the time, if there be any specially appointed: or else immediately shall follow,*

THEREFORE with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name; evermore praising Thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory: Glory be to Thee, O Lord Most High. *Amen.*

* *These words* 'Holy Father' *must be omitted on* Trinity Sunday.

PROPER PREFACES

Upon Christmas-day, *and seven days after.*

BECAUSE Thou didst give Jesus Christ Thine only Son to be born as at this time for us; who, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, was made very man of the substance of the Virgin Mary His Mother; and that without spot of sin, to make us clean from all sin. Therefore with Angels, &c.

Upon Easter-day, *and seven days after.*

BUT chiefly are we bound to praise Thee for the glorious Resurrection of Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord: for He is the very Paschal Lamb which was offered for us, and hath taken away the sin of the world; who by His death hath destroyed death, and by His rising to life again hath restored to us everlasting life. Therefore with Angels, &c.

Upon Ascension-day, *and seven days after.*

THROUGH Thy most dearly-beloved Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who after His most glorious Resurrection manifestly appeared to all His Apostles, and in their sight ascended up into

heaven to prepare a place for us; that where He is, thither we might also ascend, and reign with Him in glory. Therefore with Angels, &c.

Upon Whit-sunday, *and six days after.*

THROUGH Jesus Christ our Lord; according to whose most true promise the Holy Ghost came down as at this time from heaven with a sudden great sound, as it had been a mighty wind, in the likeness of fiery tongues, lighting upon the apostles, to teach them, and to lead them to all truth; giving them both the gift of divers languages, and also boldness with fervent zeal constantly to preach the Gospel unto all nations; whereby we have been brought out of darkness and error into the clear light and true knowledge of Thee, and of Thy Son Jesus Christ. Therefore with Angels, &c.

Upon the Feast of Trinity *only.*

WHO art one God, one Lord; not one only Person, but three Persons in one Substance. For that which we believe of the glory of the Father, the same we believe of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference or inequality. Therefore with Angels, &c.

¶ *After each of which Prefaces shall immediately be sung or said,*

THEREFORE with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name; evermore praising Thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory: Glory be to Thee, O Lord most high. *Amen.*

¶ *Then shall the Priest, kneeling down at the Lord's Table, say in the name of all them that shall receive the Communion this Prayer following:*

WE do not presume to come to this Thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in Thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under Thy Table. But Thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy: Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink His blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His body, and our souls washed through His most precious blood, and that we may evermore *dwell in Him,* and He in us. *Amen.*

¶ *When the Priest, standing before the Table, hath so ordered the Bread and Wine, that he may with the more readiness and decency break the Bread before the people, and take the Cup into his hands, he shall say the Prayer of Consecration, as followeth :*

ALMIGHTY GOD, our heavenly Father, who of Thy tender mercy didst give Thy only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the Cross for our redemption ; who made there (by His one oblation of Himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world ; and did institute, and in His holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that His precious death, until His coming again ; Hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech Thee ; and grant that we, receiving these Thy creatures of bread and wine, according to Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of His death and passion, may be partakers of His most blessed Body and Blood : who, in the same night that He was betrayed, took Bread ; and, when He had given thanks, He brake it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, Take, eat, this is My body which is given

for you: Do this in remembrance of Me. Likewise after supper He took the Cup; and, when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this; for this is My Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins: Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of Me. *Amen.*

[The communicant is recommended not to take this book with him *when he goes up to the table;* as during the few moments he spends there, it is perhaps better that his mind should be simply fixed on Christ, and that without the help of any book.]

A Prayer

WHICH MAY BE USED, IF TIME PERMITS, *BEFORE* GOING UP TO THE TABLE.

O MOST blessed Saviour, be pleased to draw near unto my soul. When I presently take the bread and wine within my lips, enable me to feed upon Thee by faith. I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come unto me, but my need is great. Dwell Thou

Thyself within my soul; and make me to feel Thy presence and Thy power.

Oh, that Thy blessing may rest upon my dear brethren gathered here. And if there be any who are drawing near for the first time to Thy holy table, do Thou specially bless, strengthen, and encourage them. O Saviour, shed abroad Thy love in every soul here before Thee. Keep the world from us. Enable us for a while to put it aside; and do Thou raise our affections to things above. Lord, make this, we pray Thee, a little heaven below.

Be with those who are near and dear to me, especially———. Comfort them, guide them, teach them, save them. Bless any one who may have felt or acted unkindly towards me, especially———. Lord, hear me, at this solemn hour, and answer my prayer, for Thy dear Name's sake. Amen.

Or this,

THOU Bread of Life, which camest down from heaven, and givest life unto the world, come now into my heart, and cleanse it from all its defilements. Take full possession of my soul, and heal and sanctify me within. O Lord, cure my infirmities; pardon my offences; enlighten my blindness; enrich my poverty. Grant that I may with reverence receive this heavenly manna, and be nourished by it unto eternal life.

O Jesus, from the shedding of Thy blood comes all my happiness. Here is my pardon, my acceptance with God, my peace within. Oh, that Thy blood may drop upon my soul. Let me feel its power. Water this barren ground, that hath brought forth the briars and thorns of sin; and may it henceforth yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

Make my heart, O Lord, to bleed for its sins, and to rejoice for its deliverance. *Amen.*

[If there should be still time to spare, you might turn to your Bible, and read thoughtfully some passage of Scripture, such as Psalm li.; Isaiah, xii.; Matt. v. 1–12; Luke, xxii. 7–20; or John, xiii. 1–17.]

¶ *Then shall the Minister first receive the Communion in both kinds himself, and then proceed to deliver the same to the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, in like manner (if any be present), and after that to the people also in order, into their hands, all meekly kneeling. And when he delivereth the Bread to any one, he shall say,*

THE Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on Him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving.

¶ *And the Minister that delivereth the Cup to any one shall say,*

THE Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Drink this in re-

membrance that Christ's Blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.

¶ *If the Consecrated Bread or Wine be all spent before all have communicated, the Priest is to consecrate more according to the Form before prescribed; beginning at* [Our Saviour Christ, in the same night, *&c.*] *for the blessing of the Bread; and at* [Likewise after Supper, *&c.*] *for the blessing of the Cup.*

A Prayer

WHICH MAY BE USED, IF TIME PERMITS, *AFTER* RECEIVING THE BREAD AND WINE.

GLORY be to Thee, O Jesus, my Lord and my God, for thus feeding my soul with Thy most blessed Body and Blood. Oh, that this heavenly food may give new life and vigour to my soul, and to the souls of all here present. Grant that we may believe on Thee more firmly, may feel towards Thee more humbly, may love Thee, *and serve Thee,* and delight in Thee, and

praise Thee, more fervently, than we ever have done before. Warm our hearts towards each other; and may we, who are worshipping Thee together now, all meet around Thy throne above to praise Thee for ever. *Amen.*

Or this,

I THANK Thee, O my Saviour, for this unspeakable privilege. I have drawn near to Thy Table; I have eaten the Bread, and drunk the Wine. Do Thou feed me with the Bread of Life. O give unto me Thy promised blessing, and to all now before Thee. Fulfil to us Thy word, that he that cometh unto Thee shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Thee shall never thirst. Wash us in Thy precious blood, and cleanse us from our sins. Come, O Holy Spirit, into our hearts, and sanctify us within.

Lord, mine eyes are unto Thee. O com-

fort me with the sweet assurance that Thou art mine. Teach these eyes, with tears of penitence and joy, to look upon Thy broken body. Enable me to subdue every sin, and to yield up my heart to Thee without reserve. Jesus, be Thou my strength, my righteousness, my portion for evermore. *Amen.*

[If there be still time to spare, try and fix your thoughts on

THE LOVE OF CHRIST; or
HIS SUFFERINGS; or
HIS SECOND COMING IN GLORY.

Or open your Bible, and read one or more of the following passages of Scripture:—Psalm xxiii.; xxxvi.; John, vi. 27–58; 1 Cor. x. 16–21; Rev. vii. 9–17; xxii. 12–21.]

¶ *When all have communicated, the Minister shall return to the Lord's Table, and reverently place upon it what remaineth of the consecrated Elements, covering the same with a fair linen cloth.*

¶ *Then shall the Priest say the Lord's Prayer, the people repeating after him every Petition.*

OUR Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, The power and the glory, For ever and ever. *Amen.*

¶ *After shall be said as followeth.*

O LORD and Heavenly Father, we Thy humble servants entirely desire Thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching Thee to grant, that by the merits and death of Thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in His blood, we and all Thy whole Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of His passion. And here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee;

humbly beseeching Thee, that all we, who are partakers of this holy Communion, may be fulfilled with Thy grace and heavenly benediction. And although we be unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto Thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech Thee to accept this our bounden duty and service; not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences, through Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto Thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. *Amen.*

Or this,

ALMIGHTY and Everliving God, we most heartily thank Thee, for that Thou dost vouchsafe to feed us, who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of Thy favour and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of Thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people and are also heirs through hope of Thy everlasting

kingdom, by the merits of the most precious death and passion of Thy dear Son. And we most humbly beseech Thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with Thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as Thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory world without end. *Amen.*

¶ *Then shall be said or sung,*

GLORY be to God on high, and in earth peace, good-will towards men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the only-begotten Son Jesu Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.

For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord; Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. *Amen.*

¶ *Then the Priest (or Bishop, if he be present) shall let them depart with this Blessing,*

THE peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord: and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you and remain with you always. *Amen.*

[The service being now over, you should go home with a thoughtful and prayerful heart. Take care, lest the world steals in, and thrusts out the good which you have received. Ask the Saviour to abide with you all the day long; and may you have much enjoyment of His presence!]

After receiving the Communion.

Sunday Evening.

(AFTER RECEIVING THE COMMUNION.)

Meditation.

CANTICLES, II. 3, 4.

'I SAT UNDER HIS SHADOW WITH GREAT DELIGHT, AND HIS FRUIT WAS SWEET TO MY TASTE; HE BROUGHT ME TO THE BANQUETING-HOUSE, AND HIS BANNER OVER ME WAS LOVE.'

HAPPY for me, if these words express what has been the experience of my soul this day! Happy for me, if the Lord's house has been *a banqueting-house* to me—if I have felt comfort and delight in that holy ordinance!

I have tried the world's banqueting-house, and found its joys unsatisfying; and its sweetest comforts have left a bitter taste behind them. But, thank God, He has led me to see where true happiness is to be

found. Christ is my portion now. It is sweet to sit under His shadow day by day. Sweet are the moments I spend under His cross. But sweeter still are those hallowed seasons, when I enjoy communion with Him at His table; for then especially am I permitted to feed on Him in my heart by faith.

But perhaps I have not felt to-day that full enjoyment which I expected. I have not experienced such unmistakable marks of my Saviour's nearness as I looked for. But still, have I not got *some* blessing? I shall be wrong if I place too much dependence on my frames and feelings. I must not desire a sign from heaven, as the Jews did. This would be tempting Christ. Let me rejoice in having had this opportunity of approaching Him; and let me be thankful if He was *in any measure* with me in this ordinance.

Still, might I not have had *more* enjoy-

ment in this feast? Surely I might; but the fault is in myself. It is not that my Lord is backward to give; but that I am backward to receive. There is fruit enough on that tree of life; but my hands are too weak, and my faith too feeble to gather it.

Yet, blessed be His name, He has not sent me *altogether* empty away. I have not drawn near to Him without obtaining *some* benefit. My soul has been nourished, strengthened, refreshed.

Oh, that I may ever abide under his shadow, and feed on Him more constantly.

Soon will this poor, feeble service of mine be exchanged for a better and a purer service. Then I shall be ushered into my Lord's banqueting-house above. Think, O my soul, of that happy day, when thy journey shall be ended, thy course finished, thy victory won! Angels and archangels will be

partakers of that heavenly banquet, who never knew what it was to have a heart of sin, or to shed a tear of sorrow. And I also shall then be freed from sin, and shall have no more cause to mourn over my deadness and unbelief. In that eternal banqueting-house, there will be nothing to mar my happiness. 'They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more.' One moment at that table—one crumb of the heavenly manna—one draught from the river of life—and all the bitter experiences of the valley of tears will be forgotten.

'Blessed indeed are they, which are called unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb!'

A Resolution.

I AM resolved, through grace, to watch and strive against those particular *sins and evil inclinations*, to which I am most

inclined. If I have shrunk from *self-denial*, I will shrink from it no more. If I have been guilty of *pride*, or *envy*, or *selfishness*, or *ill-nature*, I will be guilty of them no more. If I have been *careless in my prayers*, I will be so no more. If I have pleased myself with *vain thoughts*, I will please myself with them no more. If I have delighted in *dress and other vanities*, I will delight in them no more. If I have been false to my *vows and promises*, I will be false to them no more. If I have allowed an *evil temper* to gain the mastery over my spirit, I will in future try and keep it in check.

If there be any one sin that specially besets me, I am resolved, by God's grace, to conquer that sin, whatever it be. I will avoid the place, or the company, where I have been tempted to yield to it. If I have not loved God's day, or God's house, or God's

people, as I should have done, I will endeavour to love them more. If Christ has not been precious to my soul, oh that He may henceforth become so to me!

I will ever live as one hastening towards another world. I will 'die daily.' I will endeavour to be, not only a Christian, but a growing, faithful, rejoicing, happy Christian.

May the Lord give me strength to keep these my solemn resolutions!

Prayer.

O HEAVENLY FATHER, I desire to thank Thee for all the many mercies, which Thou hast showered down upon me on this holy day. I acknowledge that there has been much, very much, amiss in me. I shrink to think how disposed my mind has been to wander, how cold my

affections were, and how little I was touched by the solemn service in which I engaged. My God, pardon whatever was not right before Thee. All I do is mixed with sin. But I offer every sacrifice unto Thee in the name of Christ alone. I bless Thee, through Him, for whatever Thy Holy Spirit enabled me to do in any measure rightly. And I plead His merits, not only to atone for all my former transgressions, but also for my defects and failures at this holy feast.

Lord, if I have not felt as much of Thy presence and power in this ordinance as I hoped to feel, yet still I pray that a blessing may have rested on my soul, and that I may not have drawn near to Thee altogether in vain. O Christ, Thou hast on this day treated me as Thy guest; Thou hast given me Thy own body and blood to be my spiritual food. Lord, evermore feed my

hungry soul. Number me among Thy true children.

Oh, that I may ever remember that my vows are upon me; and may I walk from day to day as becomes a child of God, and an heir of heaven. May I now go forth to my duties more humble and more devoted, more watchful against my spiritual enemies, and more determined to give up all for Him, who gave up His life for me. Dwell in me, O my Saviour; and, having tasted of the heavenly gift, may I never again hunger and thirst after the things of this world.

Lord, bless me and my fellow-communicants. Hearken to the prayers which we have offered up this day, and be graciously pleased to accept them, not for any worthiness of ours, but only through the merits and intercession of Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A FEW ADDITIONAL PRAYERS.

Before Self-Examination.

O MOST HOLY GOD, who art able to look into my very heart, and knowest the most hidden of my thoughts, help me now, I beseech Thee, to examine myself. Enable me to lay bare the real state of my soul. May I deal faithfully with myself. My heart is very deceitful; do Thou show me all that is in it. Lord, it is my earnest desire to *know* my sins, and to *feel* them, and to *forsake* them. Give me Thy Holy Spirit, and enable me to do this for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

After Self-Examination.

LORD, I desire to confess and mourn over those sins, for which my own heart condemns me; still there is much that is unknown to me, but Thou art acquainted with all; not a sinful thought is hidden from Thee.

Oh, cleanse me from my secret faults, as well as from all my known transgressions. Give me that godly sorrow which worketh repentance. O Christ, forgive me. Wash me in that precious blood which cleanseth from all sin. May I now go with a penitent, believing heart to Thy table; and may I come away from it, relieved and comforted, hating sin and loving Thee. Grant me this, through the abundant mercy of Jesus Christ my Saviour. *Amen.*

For a Young Person going to receive the Communion for the first time.

O MY GOD, I am an unworthy sinner; and yet how great are the mercies Thou hast shown me in days past, and how many dost Thou still show me!

And now, Lord, Thou dost invite me to join my fellow-Christians at Thy table. O pardon my unfitness, and prepare me, I beseech Thee, for that most blessed ordinance. Give me sorrow for the past. Thou knowest how often my thoughtless heart has wandered from Thee. Lord, bring it back.

O holy and blessed Spirit, teach me to grieve and mourn for sin. Give me power to believe in Christ. Be pleased in mercy to take away this hard, stony heart of mine, and

give me a tender, loving heart—a heart to hate sin and to love my Saviour.

I thank Thee, O my God, for providing me with so many means of grace. Thou givest nourishment day by day to my poor weak soul. Enable me now to feed upon Christ in this Holy Sacrament. Let me enjoy His presence, and taste that He is gracious.

In coming to Thy table, O Lord, I am going to make an open profession of my love to Thee, and of my desire to be Thy servant. Give me courage boldly to confess Thee before men, and, having put my hand to the plough, never more to turn back.

Put away from me at this time all worldly thoughts. Increase my faith, deepen my repentance, warm my affections, and send abroad Thy love in my heart. O may this Sacrament be a rich blessing to me!

Heavenly Father, Thou knowest what is before me. Thou seest beforehand all the dangers which threaten me. Into Thy safe keeping, therefore, I commend my body and my soul. Give me grace to deny myself, and to take up my cross, and to follow Thee. If Thou guidest me with Thy counsel, I shall be safe and happy. And then do Thou at length receive me into glory, through the merit and atonement of my blessed Redeemer, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

For a Sick Person before receiving the Holy Communion.

O MOST kind and loving Father, I know that it is in mercy Thou dost afflict me. This sickness is not a proof of Thine anger, but a blessed token of Thy love.

How many blessings surround me in this sick room! O my Saviour, I thank Thee that Thou art near me, and with me. Purge me with Thy blood, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Clothe me with Thy righteousness, and send down Thy Holy Spirit to dwell in this heart of mine.

Blessed Jesus, teach me to come to Thee day by day, for Thou art my hope and my support. And now my soul longs to eat bread and to drink wine in remembrance of Thee. My spirit is weak and feeble, and I need support and strength within; but Thou art able to supply all my wants out of Thy fulness. Oh, do so in this Holy Sacrament. Nourish me with heavenly food; and when with my *lips* I receive the bread and wine, may I in my *heart* feed upon Thee.

I entreat Thee, O my God, to prepare me

for this precious feast, by giving me a humble, penitent, believing heart. I feel that I am in Thy sight utterly unworthy, utterly unclean. O receive me as I am, and make me better. If it be Thy good pleasure, may my life be spared for Thy service; or if Thou art pleased to call me hence, make me meet for the inheritance of the saints above.

Grant me now a peaceful enjoyment of Thee in this most blessed ordinance. Make Thyself known to me, and bless me abundantly. Cheer me in the remainder of my journey; and when I come to the end of it, receive me into my home in heaven, for the sake of my only Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

For a Sick Person after receiving the Holy Communion.

BLESSED LORD, Thou hast not left me to myself in this my sickness. Thou art about my bed, and wilt never leave me, nor forsake me. My body is weak and suffering; my flesh and my heart faileth, but Thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

Lord, I thank Thee for the unspeakable comforts of Thy Gospel. I thank Thee for the visits of my minister. Thou raisest up kind friends to comfort me. But Thou hast given me what is better than earthly friends, a Saviour for my guilty soul. Lord, there is pardon in Thy precious blood. To Thy cross alone I look for mercy.

Heavenly Saviour, Thou hast given me a welcome to Thy own most blessed feast. I

thank Thee for it. My soul hath received comfort. O may that heavenly food nourish me unto eternal life! Mercifully pardon whatever was amiss in me. Forgive all my coldness, and deadness of soul.

May I now be more closely united to Thee than ever. O my Father, look upon Thy poor weak child. I desire to cling to Thee. Strengthen me upon my sick bed. Let Thy hand support and guide me. Place underneath me Thy everlasting arms.

Keep my soul alive and in health, from day to day. Thou hast nourished me in this ordinance. Feed me ever more and more. Make me to feel the power of Thy Spirit in my heart, so that my faith may be more lively, my love more earnest, my submission to Thy will more complete.

Grant that I may bear all that Thou shalt lay upon me, with patient thankfulness; and

when at last I am called to pass through the valley of the shadow of death, be Thou with me; let Thy rod and Thy staff comfort me. Hear me, O Lord, in these my imperfect prayers, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

LONDON:
STRANGEWAYS AND WALDEN, Printers, Castle St. Leicester Sq.